

Oregon Downtown Development Association

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a statewide non-profit assisting communities with downtown revitalization through
Tools, Training & Technical Assistance.



How a Main Street's Self Understanding & Esteem Play a Major Role in its Design Evolution



Why think of a community with human traits such as self-understanding & esteem?



Communities 'act like' people. They have personalities & traits that offer insight into how they feel about, and understand, themselves.



a very good self understanding and esteem. They know who they are & how to proactively approach the future. They understand that good urban design features help support vibrant & livable



communities typically have a strong civic engagement & empowered citizenry.

They know who they are and what they

Carlton,
Oregon: a very
small, rural
community...







Carlton's public & private leaders have come together around a long-range vision for their community.

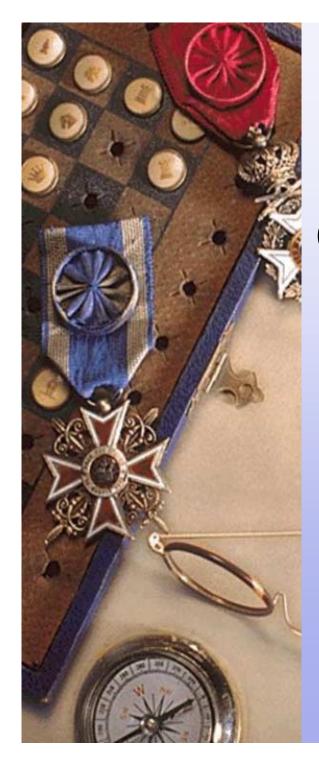


There are also many communities that don't have a good self understanding and/or esteem...they don't know what constitutes good downtown design and/or are willing to 'roll over' for suburban-type development patterns in a traditional downtown setting.



They may support a suburban model for downtown that includes:

- Overly wide travel lanes
- Lots of access points and curb cuts (drive-thrus & more!)
- Holes in the urban fabric w/surface parking lots
- Buildings that are set-back behind parking lots
- Elimination of on-street parking



They may be pressured by developers, mistaken by the perception of a downtown parking problem, or simply don't have the political will to say, "we deserve better."



















I hese communities need assistance in gaining an understanding of how good design helps improve a downtown; how to rally around a shared vision; and how they deserve to all that they can be



However, the communities that need it most, are often the most difficult to work with.



As planners, designers, engineers, etc., it is important to help a community understand the importance of good urban design & how it will have positive longterm impacts.



How?

- Show visual examples from other towns
- Use When a Highway
 Runs Through It to
 help explain concepts
 - Have locals do visual preference 'work'



- Talk in terms of how design decisions will have long-term effects
- Discuss the concepts of community selfesteem
- Engage community champions to help move concepts



HOW!

 Talk about the downtown in a holistic way...good urban design is only one component that supports a healthy central business dictrict



Vicki's Tips:

- Don't die on every hill...pick 'battles' carefully
- Try to respect a community's decision after it has 'the facts'



 Dare a community to dream big, then achieve the dream, because they deserve it

•Try & not lose your sense of humor...think about this in the bigger scheme of